

PRASE FOR SALT WATER PLAN

LET'S HAVE IT SOON, SAYS CHIEF CROKER.

The Mayor's Scheme for Guarding the City Against Fire Meets With General Approval—Fire Underwriters Invited to Talk It Over With City Officials.

There was general rejoicing among property owners, fire underwriters and others concerned in the guarding of the city against fire yesterday over the announcement that Mayor McClellan was taking steps toward the addition of a system of auxiliary salt water mains and auxiliary pumping stations to the city's fire fighting appliances. Everybody who has had occasion to study the safeguarding of the city from fire agreed in giving the Mayor unstinted praise for his broad foresight and appreciation of the city's opportunity.

The Mayor sent a letter yesterday to the president of the Board of Fire Underwriters, William Ogden, enclosing the letter of Monday to the Fire and Water Commissioners and the Borough President, and asking that the Board of Fire Underwriters appoint a committee to confer with the Mayor and his Commissioners next Tuesday. The letter follows:

William Ogden, Esq., Chairman, New York Board of Fire Underwriters, 35 Nassau Street, New York City.

DEAR SIR: Permit me to call your attention to the enclosed copy of a letter which I have sent to the Commissioner of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity, the Fire Commissioner and the President of the Borough of Manhattan, inviting their aid in the consideration of a plan for an independent system of water mains to give additional fire protection to the business section of the city.

In taking up this subject, I would like to have the advice of the Board of Fire Underwriters, and with that end in view I would appoint a committee to confer with me at your convenience. I would suggest Tuesday, Feb. 23, at 10 o'clock, as a time when I will be agreeable to your representative. Respectfully,

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Mayor.

It is known that the Board of Fire Underwriters have had in mind such a plan as that which the Mayor is now considering. They have been preparing it against a day which they felt was sure to come, when the city should be aroused to a sense of its danger and its opportunity to minimize that danger. They were glad that the average citizen could only be made to see the need for a broad scientific provision, of the sort the Mayor now advocates, by such a conflagration, right here at home, as that which visited Baltimore. It was said last night that the Board of Fire Underwriters would put all its experience and that of its members at the disposal of the Mayor, along with its official encouragement.

Charles Scoy Smith, who has had great experience in just such problems of engineering as are presented by the plan of establishing salt water mains, and fire pumping stations throughout the business part of Manhattan borough, expressed the warmest approval of the Mayor's action yesterday. He said:

"A number of years ago the Worthington pump people worked out a plan with purposes which ran parallel to those which the Mayor has now. In London there is a service which delivers water to private establishments at high pressure to small turbines which furnish power for manufacturing establishments. It is also available for fire purposes.

"The Worthington sought to get a franchise for such a concern with the idea of furnishing water to small concerns for manufacturing purposes, and also for adding to the city's fire fighting equipment. This was eighteen or twenty years ago. They intended to go into it as a private enterprise, and to use subsoil water drawn from artesian wells.

The plan fell through at the time because of the difficulty of getting a franchise. It would be quite impracticable as a private enterprise now, because of the extended use of electrical power, which has superseded any field that water power might have occupied had the plan been carried out.

"Moreover, no one who has not had reason to interest himself in the matter knows how thoroughly the subsoil water of Manhattan Island has been taken. There are concerns constantly at war with one another fighting for the subsoil water of their neighborhoods. One establishment goes down forty feet lower than its neighbors and cuts off the supply from most of them. Then one of the neighbors, two blocks away, goes down another forty feet and there is no end to the boring.

"But there is no limit to the quantity of water that can be brought from the North and East rivers. Of course, it is salt water and would corrode ordinary pipes. Without going into details it is enough to say of any objection to the plan, that any corrosion could be forestalled by the use of specially lined pipes, copper, galvanized iron or enamel. The method is not of importance enough to let it stand for a moment in the face of the plan itself, which is one that the city must come to sooner or later. Work should be begun at once, as the Mayor has most wisely indicated.

"I focused at once an objection that the installation of these independent mains would cause a general tearing up of the streets. It need do nothing of the sort. This plan is not one to be carried out in a few months or weeks. It is to be a permanent feature of the city, to stand as long as the city stands. There should be the quietest of large, classed pipes, providing for these mains and pumping stations throughout the district which is to be protected by them. The improvements may be then carried out in conjunction with other improvements.

"If a street is to be repaved, let the salt water mains be laid in that street at the same time the new pavement is put in. If there are to be additional subways, let the work of digging the tunnels and of lowering or raising cross-street sewers include the installation of the salt water mains. There is always something of the sort going on in the city somewhere, and with proper supervision the laying of the salt water mains can be so carried out that they will be installed without any serious inconvenience to the users of the streets and as fast as laid will become available for the use of the Fire Department.

Mr. Scoy Smith said that the plans should be so elastic that, if it should appear at any time that the site of a proposed pumping station might advantageously be moved a few blocks up or down town in order to accommodate the progress of laying mains to tunnel, or street paving or surface track laying operations, the change might be made without interfering with the general scheme to be adopted. Mr. Scoy Smith said that the proposition to get the power for the pumping stations from the electric plants of the surface, elevated and subway railroads was a most interesting and praiseworthy one. There are enough of these and they are so widely scattered that they could be made to possibly put all of them out of action before the fire was brought under control, he said.

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the system. We ought not to wait for a ten, twenty or fifty million dollar fire to teach us the need for it.

I can see no chance for such a fire to start. But such fires do get started, and it is just because we do not see how they start that we have not now the provision to meet them. The plans which I have brought to the attention of the commissioners and fire underwriters in this city heretofore have included three pumping stations below Fourteenth street, one out at the furthest projection of the island into the East River, one at an opposite point on the North River and one at the Battery. With water from pumping stations forced up through standpipes in the big downtown buildings, without our having to be afraid of exhausting our supply by the most lavish use of water, we would be in a position to fight a fire running in front of us as hard a wind as ever blew.

We are dependent now upon our quickness in smothering every fire that starts before it gets any headway. I believe that the department, as it stands today, is the best department in the world for just that job. But there are a dozen things that might prevent us from doing our best under present conditions. I have seen the time within two years when I could not in any possible way get enough engines up to a burning building to cover it properly.

"Sometimes it was the subway diggings that prevented us, sometimes it was snow and slush. Sometimes, as at the Park avenue fire, we had both of these to contend with. People who were inside fire lines then remember seeing whole engine companies out in the slush helping the horses roll their engines along foot by foot. That was a bad spot, but it was only bad for a limited space. Suppose these same conditions covered a wide belt of the city, as they might in a blizzard. Where would we be then if we had no pumping stations with independent pipe lines to depend on?

"It will take a long time to complete this thing, and the quicker we get at it the quicker we will make this city much more attractive as a place to invest money than it has been. I'm mighty glad to see it getting under way in my time."

Commissioner Hayes was every bit as enthusiastic as Chief Croker. When he reached his office yesterday morning he found the Mayor's letter awaiting him. It was not yet time, he said, for him to go into details of the plan, but the general scheme was one to which he could not give too much support. He would be right at the Mayor's elbow with every aid that the Fire Department could give to the plan, he said.

A complete scheme of utilizing river water under high pressure for extinguishing fires was worked out several years ago by an engineer employed by a group of business houses uptown. He prepared plans for the building of a pumping station on the North River at the expense of this association of business men, which would supply the sprinklers in their buildings with salt water, as well as furnish it through standpipes.

The plans involved an expense which seemed out of proportion to the comparatively small body of men who were interested in them, and have been held under abeyance for that reason. One of the men concerned in preparing the plans said last night that if the expense of carrying them out had been shared by all the business establishments through a broad belt of the city, it would have been regarded as merely nominal. These plans will probably be laid before the Mayor and his advisers within a few days.

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Letter Books of 500 pages at 50c and \$1; 700 pages, \$1.25; 1000 pages, \$1.60.

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laid from the Cuyahoga River up through Superior street to the public square. In later years these lines were supplemented by others covering a large part of the business section of the east and west sides of the river and through the manufacturing districts of the flats; and the system will doubtless be extended from year to year until the limit of its utility is reached.

Stationed in the river are two powerful fireboats. Whenever a fire of a threatening nature is reported one of the fireboats connects with the iron pipes and awaits orders. Firemen connect lines of hose with the special hydrants nearest the fire. They also wait for special orders, for this service is not brought into play until the efforts of the fire engines to subdue or confine the fire are defeated and the fire ladders are compelled to abandon the interior of a burning building. From four or six lines of hose from the hydrants of the fire service pipes are trained upon the building, each nozzle held by three or four stout firemen. Then the chief presses a button, and immediately there is something doing at both ends of the service. The mighty volumes of the fireboat force great volumes of water through the pipes at a pressure of 250 pounds to the square inch. The hoses twist and squirm like live anacondas, and immediately the irresistible two-and-a-half inch streams are tearing through the building, and the flood of water quickly drowns out the fire. The service is not only utilized in this way is equal to that of eight or ten engines, and frequently accomplishes results in restricting a dangerous fire to a score of engines only.

This service is also being applied to the skyscraper buildings, which are equipped with stands of pipe running from basement to roof. In the case of the new building, or any other near by which it is desired to reach, the pipe in the building is connected with the hydrant of a fire service pipe, and the pressure of the water is turned on. Two-and-a-half inch streams have been thrown 500 feet from the top of the sixteen story Williamson Building. A little further extension of the system in the business section will enable the department, with its twenty-eight engines, including the two fireboats, to protect the city from any such conflagrations as those which have devastated Chicago, Boston and Baltimore. It is now proposed to extend the special fire service pipe lines to the scores of great manufacturing plants of the Lake front, the water to be supplied from the new Kirtland street pumping station of the waterworks department, which will be a great safeguard to that part of the city. The pumping station has reserve power at all times sufficient to operate the system to its fullest efficiency.

The possibilities of this defensive auxiliary have been investigated by the fire department heads in a number of large cities. Philadelphia has adopted it extensively, and has undoubtedly the best service of the kind in the world. Detroit and Cleveland are almost abreast of Cleveland in this respect. It is the frequently expressed opinion of the most experienced fire fighters who have investigated the subject that such auxiliaries for subduing dangerous fires as the special pipe systems in Cleveland and the other cities named, doubtless, at least, the efficiency of their departments at the minimum of cost.

College Debate on the "Open Shop."

Cornell and Columbia in their fifth annual debate at Ithaca next month are to discuss this question: "Resolved, That the efforts of employers to overthrow the union shop in the trades now wholly or partly unionized are promotive of the interests of the laboring classes." Columbia will take the negative side.

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If I could show you the difference between the shoes made in my factory and those of other makers, you would understand why Douglas \$3.50 shoes cost more to make, why they hold their shape, fit better, wear longer, and are of greater intrinsic value than any other \$3.50 shoe on the market to-day.

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He should have a pair of Viciolated waterproof, heavy double-sole shoes for wet weather; a pair of Viciolated waterproof, heavy double-sole shoes for dress; and a pair of Patent Leather Button shoes for dress. Don't pay \$15 to \$18 for these shoes, you can get as much style, comfort and service in three pairs of Douglas shoes for \$15.00.

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